



Update from U.S. Senator John Cornyn
May 3, 2004

America recently learned of the death of Pat Tillman, an Army Ranger who died at the hands of the enemy in Afghanistan. We all knew about the sacrifices he made to take up arms in the war against terror – how he left behind a dream career as a professional football player, a lucrative contract, and a young wife to follow a different path. But the reason this great young man was so humble about his decision was that he understood a simple truth: that there are thousands of Pat Tillmans fighting abroad today, men and women who have left behind all they hold dear in Texas and across the nation to battle an enemy that threatens the American people and our way of life. I strongly believe that we must do everything in our power to support all the heroes of this just war, and comfort those they leave behind at home.

Supporting Our Military

We need to use every resource at our disposal to ensure a [stable and free Iraq](#), and I believe we should have as many troops there as the commanders on the ground say they need to get that job done. The last thing they need is for people on Capitol Hill telling them how to do their job. If the commanders say they need the help, we should provide it – otherwise I think we should leave the job to them. We have the most professional, most expert fighting force on the face of the planet. I'm very proud of the job they've done and I know America and Texas continue to be very proud of the job our military is doing.

Jobs and Economic Growth

We are on the right track back to recovery. I am encouraged by the fact that the workforce added 308,000 jobs in March, the largest increase in four years. I support President Bush's plan to [strengthen math and science](#) education, in addition to community college initiatives, as ways for American workers to maintain their competitive edge over the rest of the world. I'm also extremely pleased that CITGO Petroleum will be bringing [1,000 new jobs](#) to Texas by moving their U.S. headquarters to Houston. We need to continue to work towards making America and Texas the most free market-friendly places on the planet.

Improving Health Care

As of this month, seniors on Medicare Part A or B can call 1-800-MEDICARE or go to www.medicare.gov to get price comparisons and apply for discount drug cards. These cards will give seniors on Medicare help toward the purchase of needed prescription drugs and will provide a \$600 credit for patients under a certain income. The [Medicare Modernization Act](#) will also provide approximately \$87 million per year to rural hospitals in Texas, to help them cover operating costs and continue providing critical healthcare services. Too often in Washington, we view things in terms of the numbers of people. But rural Texans deserve just as much attention as any other – they aren't just numbers on a page, but real people with real lives and real health needs. I will continue to work in Washington with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to seek more support for our rural health centers and hospitals in Texas.

Strengthening Homeland Security

As the work of the 9/11 Commission continued with the recent testimony of President Bush and Vice President Cheney, I believe it is important that we assign blame for that horrible tragedy where it belongs: with Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. Recently some facts have come to light about former Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick, who is currently a Commission member. It is clear from newly released materials that Commissioner Gorelick has special knowledge of the facts and circumstances regarding the "wall" that, prior to the Patriot Act, prevented the sharing of communications between law enforcement and intelligence agencies. The Commission has refused requests for Ms. Gorelick to testify as a witness. This is a self-inflicted wound on the [credibility of the 9/11 Commission](#), and I hope they will reconsider their decision and let the nation have the benefit of full knowledge and understanding of how the "wall" was created and strengthened under her watch. Testimony in the 9/11 Commission hearings have shown us that beyond doubt removal of the "wall" has made America safer.

Growing the Economy by Combating Copyright Theft

This month we passed much-needed legislation in the Senate Judiciary Committee to [combat copyright piracy](#) of entertainment industry products. The Artists' Rights and Theft Prevention Act, or ART Act, is necessary because copyright piracy is a serious threat not only to the entertainment industry, but also to a U.S. economy now getting back on its feet. The bill, likely to be passed by the full Senate soon, focuses on the most egregious form of copyright piracy plaguing the entertainment industry today: the piracy of film, movies, and other copyrighted materials before copyright owners have had the opportunity to fully market their products.

Come See Me

If you're traveling to Washington for business or pleasure, I would greatly appreciate the chance to say hello while you're here. I have an open house in my office, Hart Senate Office Building, Room 625, at 9:00 AM every Tuesday while the Senate is in session, so I can greet and talk with Texans who are here. Please call Jamie McWright in my office at (202) 224-2934 to let me know you'll be coming.

Best regards,

Senator John Cornyn